EPISTLE
to
Friends of Truth
In and about
LONDON

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DEarly and well-beloved in Christ our Life and Glory, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, and at this time quickeneth my heart into the lively remembrance of you all, herewith sending the hearty and fervent salutation of my dear and perfect Love, unto all the Faithful amongst you; for the Fathers Love filleth my heart, and hath raised up my spirit into an holy frame and temper of gladness and rejoycing, of great joy and comfort in the remembrance and feeling sence of what the Lord hath wrought and made manifest among his people, and the fulness of his Love and rejoycing floweth out in prayfing and magnifying the Lord our God for evermore. Oh what hath the Lord wrought for us in our Day! How hath his out-stretched Arm been made bare again and again for our salvation and deliverance? How many have his mercies been, and how numberless have his lovingkindnesses been shewed to us? How hath his power and wisdom been discovered amongst his People, by which we are quickned and revived into the Life of Righteousness and Peace, to be Servants and Heirs of the Everlasting Father, the Lord of Heaven and Earth, being called by him out of Darkness into his marvelous Light? And how glorious is the Light that hath appeared upon our Tabernacle, and shined in our hearts, and that hath led us in the way of Peace, and taught us in the path of Righteousness; thus and much more hath the hand of the Lord wrought for us, having raised us up to be a People, that in times past were not a People; but now he hath formed us for himself, and created us for his praise, having gathered us as a Shepherd doth his Flock from our strayed estate, in which we were strangers and afar off, inhabiting in death and darkness, but now raised up to sit together in heavenly places, and to feed in the fat pastures of his fulness that filleth all in all.

This hath been effected by the hand and power of the most High, who hath also preserved us unto this day through many tryals and tribulations; and again and again, when our enemies have risen up against us to destroy us, even then hath the Lord been our defence, and confounded our Persecutors, so that we yet live, blessed is the Name of the Lord, the remembrance of which infinite tender mercies from the Father, that we have received, have a heavenly influence upon my heart at this time, which causeth me to say, *what manner of love is this! Oh the height, and depth, and infiniteness of the same! the beauty thereof hath ravished my heart, the strength thereof hath overcome me, and the virtue thereof hath overcome me, and the vertue thereof hath filled my soul*: and this is the present frame of my spirit; *Full of love and good will to the Lord God, and to all his Saints, and particularly unto you, unto whom my spirit doth run in the Lord the increase of peace, and mercies, and blessings, and all heavenly virtue unto you all, for I am under particular engagements unto you more than unto many.*

1. Because my labour and service in the work of the Gospel hath been more amongst you than amongst others; even for divers years have I been conversant among you, in the administration of the gift of the Gospel, by dispensing the Word of Life, to the Converting of some, and to the Strengthning and Confirming of others in the way of the Lord. And let the Just God bear witness of the faithfulness, and integrity and sincerity of heart, in which he hath carried me amongst you, while many precious days I have passed away with you, and have set before you but you, nor do I desire ought concerning you, but your faithfulness to the Lord, and your growth and establishment in the wisdom of Christ Jesus, and the blessings and peace may ever rest with you. And seeing it is the will that some of my precious years in the service of God, may be so spent amongst you, therefore is my heart and spirit engaged towards you, even while I live, to advise you, and exhort you, and to pray for you, that you may be *setled in the Faith, and established in the Truth, and confirmed in the Possession that never fades away.*

2. In respect of that place of your outward Residence, (that great City I mean) where Satans Seat is, and where wickedness abounds, and many temptations and provocations, which may attempt to draw you from the Lord. I do know the dangers are many which

which may easily be met withall in that place. There is both the love, glory and excellency of this world near unto you; and also the terrours, threats, losses and persecutions of this evil world even dwelling with you, all which may work upon some many fears and doubts, and beget temptations to the denying of the Lord; and seeing the danger is such to you-wards in that place, even more than to some others, therefore is my soul engaged to admonish, and instruct, and pray for your preservation unto the end, that ye may walk as the Lords, and to his glory.

3. And also my desires are for you, that blessings and peace may be multiplied unto you, and that you may walk in the wisdom and power of the Lord in this respect, that Truth may be honoured, and crowned with dominion and authority, and good report in that great City, by your faithfulness, and patience, and diligence, and all the fruits of righteousness; for as many temptations do attend you (as I have said before) so also many eyes are upon you, beholding what you are, and what you do, and what will become of you, and if you walk in faithfulness and righteousness, and be preserved unto the Lord in boldness and valour for his Names sake, this will magnifie the Truth, and crown it with honour, and strengthen and comfort many that are weak, and be a joy to all the upright, and it will confound your enemies, and put them to shame, and limit the unreasonable spirit of the power of darkness, when our enemies see your just, faithful, righteous and inoffensive manner of walking in all things. And therefore for this cause, my heart is engaged to pray for you, seeing the eyes of many are upon you to mark your wayes and doings, and what will be the end.

And now, dearly beloved, as by the free grace and kindness of God ye are called unto this calling, and are renewed and changed into the life of Righteousness; so it is by the same grace and power of the Father, that ye must stand and be preserved unto the end; for by grace and faith we all stand, even through diligence, faithfulness, and watchfulness in the same grace, being obedient to its teachings, and fruitful in its motions, and walking by its rule, in meekness and lowliness of heart, in sincerity and godly fear, not being or doing any thing of our selves, distinct or divided from this grace, but being and doing all things, through the grace of God dwelling in us, and this is the highest perfection of Saints;

every

[illegible] do: And wait upon the Lord that ye [illegible] stablished, and settled in the Truth, and that ye [illegible] be confirmed therein for ever, as being natural heirs of the [illegible]sion of Grace and Truth, to do, and walk, and live accord[illegible]ng to his will, being so inherited, never to go forth any more, a[illegible]able to say, Nothing can separate us from the Love of God; not [illegible]eath, nor Life, nor any other thing: For I would put you in min[illegible], and ye also know it, how that many have been touched in their [illegible]earts with the sence of the Lord, and his Love, yea, and many ha[illegible]e enjoyed of the good gift of God, and walked with us for a tim[illegible], that have not remained unto the end, but have started aside fro[illegible]m the Lord, and been overcome with the temptations of this world, even to the forsaking of the way of Truth and Righteousness, an[illegible] such have dishonoured the Lord, and forfeited their peace and [illegible]heritance in God, and become hardned in their hearts, and dea[illegible]d to God, and the latter end of such hath been worse than their b[illegible]ginning; though yet for a time such walked with us, and tasted [illegible]of the good gifts of God, yet are become reprobate, because their h[illegible]earts have not been firm, and constant, and sound, and approved to [illegible]God, but of an evil frame and temper of spirit; ambitious, vain-[illegible]glorious, self-seeking, and such like, which Spirit could not reta[illegible]in the gift of God, but abused it and perverted it from its proper [illegible]end. And therefore, dearly beloved, it is exceeding pretious to h[illegible]ave a heart and spirit, tryed and approved of the Lord; a good an[illegible] ho[illegible]nest heart, an upright and contrite spirit, for that will abi[illegible]de in faithfulness unto God through all tribulations and trials, if the [illegible]heart be right in the sight of God, whatsoever the knowledg[illegible]e be, and whether the gifts be little or great, yet the Lords prese[illegible]nce is [illegible]with such are blessed; so that its not enough, only to h[illegible]ave a [illegible]taste and sense of the loving kindness of God, but every one [illegible]ought therein, to be approved heart and tried Spirit, [illegible]which [illegible]overcomes all things and not be shaken nor moved, and [illegible]is [illegible]of a meek and lowly, sincere and upr[illegible]ight [illegible]spirit,

which is eternal, even the Truth, and which only can make you free indeed. And proceeding to the ancient Doctrine of Christ, which we have believed, every one must look to your own particular standing and must feel your own particular joy, peace and comfort, and must receive the assurance of Life in your own souls; for it is an everlasting word, every one must stand by their own, by what they find and enjoy of eternal Life in their own hearts, that only is every ones security and assurance in the Kingdom of Peace and Glory; and it is the height of perfection, to have the seal of the Spirit of God in our Consciences, witnessing to us, *That we are the Lords*: and blessed are they that have this Testimony, even that of the Spirit of the Father, which is the everlasting Comforter against all sorrow, and the perfect Seal against all doubts, and the sure Guide against all opposition. This is the office of the Spirit of the Lord, and its work in the hearts of his Children; therefore my advice is to you as from the beginning, Look to your own, to your own measure of the gift of grace and truth, that only stands, when all wanderings after men and things fall, and in that is your security, as I have said.

And let your conversations and walkings be such *as becometh the Gospel of Christ*, in all faithfulness and righteousness, that you may be an honour to the Lord in your generation; for this only have we to do in this world, even to shew forth his praise and glory, *who hath created us in Christ Jesus*. All things in relation to Truth are well in these Countries; the Dominion of Truth is set up over the heads of the wicked, and it is a terrour to its enemies, and the joy of all good men; and Friends are faithful in the Power of the Lord, and look over this world, to the world that hath no end, and their hope and confidence is in that; and Meetings are generally quiet, and the presence of the Lord is amongst his People. And I commend to the Grace, Power and Wisdom of the Lord God are committed, who is the only Preserver of all his Children. *Grace and peace be with you all.*

[illegible] the 18th. Day of
the 1th. Month, 1662.